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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000782

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL KDEM HO VE BR CI

SUBJECT: CHILEAN PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR: ZELAYA'S VISIT "VERY PRODUCTIVE"

Classified By: ADCM Laurie Weitzenkorn for Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Bachelet Presidential Advisor Marcos Robledo told the Ambassador that Manuel Zelaya's August 13 visit to Santiago was "very productive." According to Robledo, President Bachelet and several members of the Chilean Congress emphasized the Obama Administration's desire to play a constructive role in Honduras. In particular, they made the point that Zelaya should not make it more difficult for the United States to have a positive impact. They urged Zelaya to understand U.S. needs and underscored the difficulty caused by Zelaya's association with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

¶2. (C) Robledo noted that Brazil delivered a similar message to Zelaya, but that Chile pressed even harder.

¶3. (C) Zelaya apparently listened. After his meeting with President Bachelet he publicly stated that Chavez did not speak for him. In his public statement, he also said that U.S. actions in response to the coup have been "soft and half-hearted" and that he hoped the United States will take stronger measures in the upcoming days.

¶4. (C) During his meeting with President Bachelet, Zelaya outlined his concerns about losing valuable time. He stated the need to do something soon, and said that he will try to see Secretary Clinton in the next two weeks.

¶5. (C) Zelaya's visit was quickly arranged following his trip to Brazil, and Bachelet had to make last minute adjustments to her schedule to accommodate his brief appearance. The visit came the day after Chile withdrew the diplomatic status of the Honduran Ambassador to Chile. The GOC now recognizes Zelaya's representative in Washington, Eduardo Enrique Reina, as the Honduran Ambassador to Chile. Rolando Drago, head of protocol at the Foreign Ministry, told the Ambassador on August 11 that Chile had received the request from Zelaya to revoke the former Ambassador's status, but at the time Chile had not decided how to proceed. (Comment: Since Chile acted on Zelaya's request on August 12, the same day Chilean officials learned of his visit, we suspect that the trip helped precipitate a decision to withdraw the ambassador's diplomatic status.)

SIMONS